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Per your request.

RICHARD M. BISSELL, JR.

17 February 1961

(DATE)

BRIEFING PAPER ON THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

I. Situation

Following the break in diplomatic relations in August 1960 U.S./Dominican relations have worsened steadily, and the anti-U. S. sentiment of the GODR was brought sharply into focus by the appearance of pickets outside our consulate on 5 January in protest against the OAS vote to extend trade sanctions against the Dominican Republic. The pickets bore signs condemning the interventionist policy of the U. S. and calling for the expulsion of Consul General Dearborn, whom they labeled a spy. The Dominican radio and press continued to censure President Eisenhower as being responsible for the present state of affairs, while maintaining a reserve concerning President Kennedy, apparently adopting a "wait and see" attitude, although it has previously expressed some reservations regarding the President's choice of advisers on Latin America.

On 26 January the GODR ordered the expulsion of U. S. Vice Consul James A. McNamara on the ground that he was making derogatory remarks about the country; however, it is probable that this expulsion was in retaliation and anger over the belief that the U. S. had provided information to Venezuela on Trujillo's efforts to overthrow or assassinate President Batencourt.

It is thought by some informed observers that the outcome of the sugar legislation which comes up for renewal in the U. S. Congress in March 1961 will be all-important to the future of U. S./Dominican relations. Some say that the Trujillo government cannot last another six months if they do not get their share of the Cuban windfall sugar; and rumors are circulating in Ciudad Trujillo that if they are deprived of the windfall the GODR plans to expropriate American properties and terminate U. S. consular relations.

II Operational Summary

A. General It will be recalled that on 24 January 1961 the Special Group authorized the Agency to provide dissident exiled Dominican groups with limited arms and equipment provided their delivery to elements within the Dominican Republic was effected by Dominicans. Immediately following this decision we indicated to witting leaders of the VRD (BETANCOURT - FIGUERES - ORNES Group) and the FCR (Internal Dissident Group withwhom DEARBORN is in touch) that we were prepared to provide them a limited supply of arms and equipment provided they developed the capability to introduce same into the Dominican Republic.

On 27 January Station Caracas was authorized to inform President BETANCOURT the U. S. is now providing financial support and technical guidance to VRD activities directed by Horacio ORNES,

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specifically for ship repairs, recruiting and training crews, locating sites and facilities for future PM activities, strengthening the political organization of the VRD and propaganda. On 30 January Station Caracas was authorized to inform BETANCOURT that Headquarters was prepared to consider providing arms and equipment to any bona fide resistance element with whom adequate contact can be established. BETANCOURT was to be encouraged to recommend any new individuals or groups he considered useful to further objectives of the project. Station Caracas reported that President BETANCOURT was gratified to receive the above information.

In Headquarters contact with FCR exiled leaders, they disclosed their plan of action which they felt could be implemented if they were provided with arms for 300 men, explosives, and remote control detonation devices. They also claimed to have a small boat infil-exfil capability. On the other hand the VRD, while claiming no internal organization, claimed a sea and air capability and are the chosen instruments of President BETANCOURT and Jose FIGUERES.

B. Frente Civica Revolucionaria (FCR)

(1) We have recently been in touch with key exiled leaders of the FCR and they have expressed a willingness to assemble a small cadre in Puerto Rico. It is contemplated that they will develop maritime capability, be in touch with their internal counterparts through W/T facilities, and develop plans for implementing the internal group's plan of action. In view of their reluctance to deal directly with the ORNES Group (VRD) and in the interests of security we plan to keep them compartmented for the time being.

(2) Through our Station in Ciudad Trujillo we are attempting to ascertain the details of the FCR's plan of action and develop a stay-behind communication capability.

C. Vanguardia Revolucionaria Dominicana (VRD)

(1) We are actively supporting the VRD (the ORNES group) in repairing and outfitting their yacht so as to develop an arms delivery capability. It is estimated that it will take from 45 to 60 days to complete this work. Additional time may be needed to recruit and train a crew.

(2) Support is also being given to the VRD's propaganda and organizational activities. A program is being developed with the hope that the VRD can develop their own contacts and sources of information within the Dominican Republic.

D. Possibility of Developing a Boycott Capability

(1) During the summer of 1960 WH Division made use of Fernando MUNIZ Silva, Dominican exile in Puerto Rico and at the time head of the

Syndicate of Free Dominican Labor in Exile (SLTDE), to organize picketing activities in San Juan against Ships carrying cargo to or from the Dominican Republic. The picketing had some success and showed promise of becoming a threat to the Dominican economy, but was finally broken up by the International Longshoremens Association (ILA), at least one officer of which was reportedly in the pay of Trujillo.

(2) Inasmuch as the ILA has recently abrogated its contract with the Dominican unions under pressure from George Meany it is felt that now would be a good time to consider resumption of picketing activities in San Juan, in the hope that such action might spark similar activities in other ports. Trujillo has demonstrated an awareness of the importance of smooth labor relations in foreign ports and it is felt that a blow at this time from international labor would do much to bring the dictator to his knees.

(3) It should be noted that the Department of State last summer disapproved any approach to U. S. unions on this subject. WHD feels that perhaps this announced policy should now be reviewed in the light of more recent developments and an attempt be made, through covert channels if necessary, to build up an international shipping boycott against the GODR.

III Conclusions

(1) In many respects initial talks with FCR and VRD leaders reveal that they over-estimate their own capabilities. Neither has an immediate capability to introduce arms into the area or a firm plan of action.

(2) That we have indicated to both organizations our willingness to help has been a boost to their morale and has also precipitated a noticeable withdrawal from earlier claims of "all we need is arms and a little help and we can do the job".

(3) Recent reports on internal conditions in the Dominican Republic clearly point out that the country is rapidly approaching a stage of complete economic paralysis, a situation that has created feelings of tension and desperation, not only among the opposition elements but within the ranks of the Trujillo clique itself. While sources within the middle class express fears of eventual liquidation of that class by the dictator and his son Ramfis, it is not likely that Trujillo will move until he lears of the outcome in late March 1961 of congressional action on the windfall sugar quota. If such action is favorable to Trujillo, it is probable that he will continue to rule uneasily for an indefinite period unless material outside pressure is brought to bear

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against him. If, however, his windfall is taken from him, it is the firm opinion of this Division that a violent reaction on his part will shortly thereafter be felt which will end either with the liquidation of Trujillo and his cohorts or with a complete roll-up of the internal opposition. While the organization of delivery capabilities described elsewhere in this memorandum is proceeding according to schedule, it is now feared that these capabilities will not be ready for use until the appropriate time, i.e., prior to 1 April, has passed and until there may no longer exist internal assets with which to deal. WH Division, therefore, recommends that consideration be given to the immediate use of sea capabilities now employed by WH/4 to cache the requested arms and other material on land areas contiguous to the Dominican coast from whence, as informed FCR elements claim they can do, infiltration of the arms can be carried out by members of the internal FCR by the use of fishing vessels.